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Reims Cathedral Burning During World War I

Rational Inhumanism Vs Landian Anti-Philosophy*

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This response is written for oral presentation and it is not going to be polite. It is intentionally polemical in places. The polemic is not affectiv garnish but a diagnostic instrument. When a position immunizes itself against reasons, politeness becomes a candid form of complicity.

1. Why return to an old essay now?

I was asked to articulate my general view of philosophy and rationalism with a particular focus on my earlier essay 'The Labor of the Inhuman,' and to recast it in explicit confrontation with Nick Land and the Landian afterlife. This request is not merely an invitation to *debate* a famous name. It forces a decision about what counts as philosophy at all.

If philosophy is packaged as a cabinet of takes, a showroom of lifestyles, then Land's work becomes another option on the shelf. One chooses between rationalism and anti-rationalism, between humanism and anti-humanism, between the space of reasons and the abyss of time. But philosophy is not a retail aisle for positions, even when institutions try to domesticate it into one. It remains the name, generic but not empty, for a specific task. A stubborn resistance to the recoding of thought as identity, posture, tribe, and consumable temperament. It refuses the shelving of ideas into 'right' and 'left,' 'academic' and 'anti-academic,' 'critical' and 'post-critical,' as if the point were merely to pick a shelf and inhabit it.

Philosophy persists less as a settled doctrine than as a resistant name. The word survives across twenty-six centuries, across incompatible schools, across translations that should have dissolved it into local equivalents, yet it continues to circulate as if it were both generic and singular at once. As the Iranian philosopher Morad Farhadpour has pointed out,[1] this is not an accident of academic branding. It is a clue to what philosophy is for, holding open the unresolved traffic between the universal and the particular without letting either side collapse into a tribal badge or an administrative label. In this sense philosophy resembles democracy. Both names travel everywhere, both names

promise ‘the whole,’ and both names keep returning as the remainder that refuses to be counted cleanly, the part that exposes how counting fails.

Land has reasons to despise the democratic auditorium. Majorities can be stupid, institutions can be captured, and ‘participation’ can become ceremonial exercises in idiocy. But he turns those failures into a craving for exemption, mistaking contestability for rule by headcount, and preferring verdicts that never have to justify themselves. Under this pressure, ‘critical’ names a double obligation. It means critique, and it means crisis. A view earns the name philosophical only when it can survive that double bind, when it can be made to answer, made to revise, made to carry an audit trail rather than laundering its commitments into destiny.

This resistance is not heroic purity. Philosophy fails constantly. It is repeatedly defanged and absorbed by careers and slogans. Yet, it persists as a last front because it can still insist on what lifestyles cannot sustain. Commitments that bind, reasons that compel, and revisions that hurt. Philosophy, at its minimum, is the discipline of letting one’s commitments generate consequences one did not choose in advance.

Land has also become something else, a technocultural singularity. Not a thinker among thinkers, but an attractor produced by platform dynamics and ideological vacancy, circulating less as arguments than as transferable permission. An exhausted left, hungry for the sensation of radicalism after the labor of organization is abandoned, can mistake Land’s anti-philosophy for a perverse upgrade of critique, heat as

depth, cruelty as candor, disdain for reasons as unmasking. The result is not radicalism but transgression-theatre, where negation is enjoyed as politics and the collapse of norms is taken for emancipation.

At the same time, the alt- and far-right can stage a different, equally perverted solidarity. Land becomes a vocabulary for what they already want to say, bile dressed in the costume of necessity. Yet, he is also a suspect, because he is an intellectual, and intellectuality is a liability in movements that require simplicity, cognitive loyalty, repetition, and consistency. So, he is both useful and untrustworthy, a phrase-bank to be laundered, not a partner to be understood. That economy of attraction and suspicion is part of the singularity. Each camp extracts what it needs and discards the rest.

This is the deeper point. Landianism spreads because it offers an exit from justificatory exposure, a portable exemption that can be adapted to multiple resentments. It turns realism into a style, and style into a substitute for reasons, promising a world in which no one has to ever argue, only to align with 'what is coming.' That is why the phenomenon must be criticized at the level of its circulation, not only at the level of its propositions. The answer is not simply to debunk Land. It is to rebuild the missing middle, a philosophical culture capable of sustaining modernity without worshiping it, criticizing technology without moral drama, and refusing the promotion of destiny into warrant.

It is tempting to misread this as the usual morality play. Land as omnipotent villain, the argument as mere bitterness, and the reader as the sober adult asking everyone to calm down. That reading is

convenient because it lets the critic keep the very exemption under discussion, that is the right to stand above reasons while calling it realism. Yes, cultures hit thresholds where no amount of thinking can master a trajectory. But that truism becomes a cheap alibi the moment it is used to smuggle abdication back in as wisdom. Thinking i not a steering wheel. It is the design of the steering gear, the feedback surfaces, the procedures for contestation. It cannot command the storm, but it can decide whether claims remain answerable, interventions remain revisable, and failures remain legible rather than mythologized.

Land matters here less as a prime mover than as a belated attractor, a logo for intellectual vacancy, a ready-made passport out of justificatory exposure. In that posture, acceleration becomes a theodicy for the rhetorically lazy: whatever happens is right because i happens, whatever wins is true because it wins, and realism names th refusal to build appeal, audit, retraction, and repair into the system. The polemic targets that conversion of inevitability into warrant, not the grandeur of a single man. In a Bogdanovian vocabulary, the alternative is not total control but organization, the institution of enabling constraints that keep a trajectory corrigible even when no one is in charge of it. This is precisely how an attractor gets manufactured and circulated.

There is a close analogue, and it is instructive, because it shows how an attractor can be manufactured long before it is believed. Ahmad Fardid, often described as the Iranian Heidegger, built a charismatic apparatus out of importation. He condensed Heideggerian anti-modernity into a portable vocabulary of cultural authenticity and

‘Westoxification,’ then let that vocabulary drift into a politico-theological register that could be annexed by clerical conservatism and the post-revolutionary state. In that trajectory, philosophy does not guide politics by argument. It supplies incantations that relieve politics of the burden of justification. The decisive ingredient was not doctrinal subtlety but the vacancy of a stable philosophical ecology, paired with a prestige import that could be wielded as a cultural weapon.

Land is not Fardid. The polarity flips. Fardid’s charisma drew power from anti-technology and anti-modernity, Land’s from hyper-modernity and techno-fatalism. Yet the mechanism rhymes. A thinker becomes a attractor when a scene lacks the patient infrastructure for disagreement and the established poles present themselves as exhausted. The US scene matters here. When the loud options are moralistic anti-technology on one side and managerial techno-optimism on the other, the vacancy is real. Into that space Land arrives, not with a program, but a jerry can full of accelerants. He offers a style of lucidity that makes refusal of justificatory exposure feel like realism, and he supplies different factions with the same transferable permission to burn what they already want to burn.

Land exploits that vacancy by treating contestation itself as pathology. The slow work of stating conditions, specifying stakes, tracking costs, and admitting defeaters is redescribed as *security* reflex and primate panic. His central gesture is substitution, the labor of justification gives way to the glamour of inevitability. He swaps arguments for accelerants, then calls the burn insight. Landian inevitability is counterfeit realism, a get-out-of-reply-free card stamped with ‘what is

coming.' If every objection is already a symptom, nothing has to be answered on the merits.

Thus, the space of the reasons is displaced by a regime of selection, time, capital, war, optimization, whatever can be invoked as an *externa criterion*. Behind this move sits a familiar ancestor. Darwinian selectio abstracted into a metaphysics. The Landian trick is to treat selection not as a local operator but as a final arbiter. Whatever survives is taken to deserve survival. Whatever scales is taken to be true. This is how selection is promoted into a theory of justification, and it is also how resistance becomes illegible. If the arbiter is selection, then objections are not reasons, they are symptoms.

A Bogdanovian organizational eye sees immediately what the 'Darwin-as-destiny' move flattens. Bogdanov generalizes Darwin by treating selection (*podbor*) as a universal regulator of organization and by stripping 'natural' of its privilege. Selection is a name for the ongoing sorting of connections—what gets stabilized, what gets loosened, wha gets broken—under environmental pressure, where *environment* is never simply given but can be made, remodeled, and contested. Selection is not a single brute mechanism called competition. It is an organizational function whose character shifts with scale, with the architecture of the process, and with what counts as the unit.

In that sense, selection is always double-faced. *Positive selection* is th stabilization and development of a complex, the consolidation of its internal correlations and its capacity to persist. On the other hand, *negative selection* is disorganization and absorption, often triggered b a single unfavorable condition that punctures the complex's viability.

But the crucial point is that the unit of selection is elastic. In other words, the same complex can be decomposed into parts, turning som of its components into the environment of others, so that internal selection can dominate the fate of the whole. Therefore, *podbor* is closer to active self-construction than to passive filtering: the structure is continually rebuilt through the very pressures that threaten it.

This is also where *bi-regulation* matters.[2] A bi-regulatory coupling in concurrent complexity theory, where asynchronous processing time becomes a factor, is not a truce with rivalry. It is an organizational coupling in which two complexes mutually regulate one another, each becoming a decisive part of the other's environment. Here selection does not primarily look like head-to-head combat. It selects for interfaces, coordination, division of labor, crisis-damping constraints, and even forms of mutual dependence that make local rivalry irrationa The point is not to moralize selection into cooperation. It is to insist that selection is scale-sensitive and organization-dependent, and that a regime of selection is itself an engineered milieu rather than a neutral arena. Converting one historically local selection regime, typically the crudest market-naturalist one, into Reality-as-such is not hard-headed realism. It is a category mistake that erases the design and contestability of the environment in which selection is doing its work.

There is also a macho-naturalist romance, running from Jack London to Robert Heinlein and Cormac McCarthy, that tends to attach itself t this mistake. Becoming inhuman is misimagined as becoming animal under a 'law of the wild,' and the law of the wild is quietly taken as

permission to stop giving reasons. The dog-avatar, the canine mask, the fantasy of a creature purified by competition, even the ‘war is god mantra belong to this genre. *The Sea-Wolf* gives the type its emblem. Wolf Larsen is the captain as autodidact, metaphysician of ‘survival,’ who, on the high seas, can lecture while he breaks you. Yet, London also supplies the corrective that Landian romance keeps trying to misread. Wolf has a brother named Death Larsen, and Wolf’s own diagnosis is brutally exact, Death is ‘a lump of an animal without any head,’ scarcely able to read or write. Death does not need a cosmology, only leverage, sabotage, bribery, and the plain competence of cruelty. Wolf’s blindness at the end is not ‘philosophy becoming truth.’ It is the world ruining you without endorsing you, and selection requiring no thinker to crown it. The genre wants the wolf-philosopher the magnificent predator who can call appetite a truth. What it really wants is exemption, that is, predation as cognition. Yet, in Stephen Jay Gould’s sense, selection often rewards *arrested development*—the hairless, defanged, Mickey-Mousey human that reads as harmless whil becoming an ultra-cute new apex predator.

The afterlife of Landianism has mutated so far from the wolf-romance that it now prefers a different mask, one that keeps the exemption while changing the face. If the macho-naturalist register wants the predator who can call appetite a truth, the cute register wants something even more efficient, the predator that does not have to loo like a predator at all. For that reason, the turn named by Amy Ireland and Maya B. Kronic under the heading of *Cute Accelerationism* matter —less as a verdict on their project than as a way to diagnose what happens when ‘cute’ is taken up as if it had no history. Their project is

valuable precisely as a record of conceptual self-experimentation, with concepts tried on as practices and practices used to pressure-test concepts.[3] But the stake here is different. It concerns the *insufficiently historicized* adoption of 'cute' as a neutral medium, a style whose genealogy can be treated as irrelevant. In that wider uptake, 'cute' can indeed become the carrier-wave for a loosened identity, a gender-plasticity, a refusal of inherited hard edges, a way of not taking the given body or the given role for granted.

However, after the Bomb, 'cute' transformed into the style, innocence became just a UI choice. And that is exactly where the underside begins. 'Cute' is not merely a commercial tone, it is also a postwar interface, one whose sweetness can coexist with occluded violence and a thinned public accounting. Japan did have the Tokyo Trials, but the occupation settlement and Cold War priorities shaped what could be made legible as responsibility, and some of the darkest materials were not prosecuted so much as absorbed into intelligence and research bargains. The most infamous case is Unit 731, where key figures avoided prosecution in exchange for experimental data.

Under the long moral half-life of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, this produces a double exposure. Victimhood becomes globally readable at the level of spectacle, while certain imperial continuities become locally survivable as mood, as style, as the soft face of 'kawaii,' even as the state later learned to export cuteness as soft power through official pop-culture diplomacy and 'kawaii ambassadors.' Accordingly, the kitten-face is not the opposite of the wolf. It is the wolf's upgraded 'plush' avatar, optimized for circulation, de-fanged in appearance, and therefore, harder to indict when it bites.

Alongside Land's fang fantasy, there is a second register, the *dissolution* register. In *The Thirst for Annihilation*, the same exemption drive is staged as an ecstatic hydraulics of liquefaction. Bones, laws, and monuments are treated as hardened crust to be eroded, and language itself is dragged into 'oozing slime and dirt,' unt boundaries appear as banks that should give way to 'infiltration and collapse into the deluge.'[4]

This can be misread as a cosmic feminism because it flatters 'fluidity' against phallic rigidity and civic form (Land's jab at the academic cult of Derrida of his time in academia is telling, 'If deconstruction spent less time playing with its willy maybe it could cross the line...'). But the Henry Miller digression gives away the mechanism under the hood. Th feminine arrives as a metaphysical blank, a 'crack' reduced to zero, then promoted into a cosmic operator—an equation sign that cancels remainder and permits drift beyond codes, names, and stable commitments. The text rehearses the old chain that binds death to matter, inertia, femininity, and castration, then repurposes it as libidinal license for melting criteria. This is not feminist content. It is cosmetic hydraulics whose point is to dissolve tests. The same hydraulic imagination returns, later, as a geopolitical fetish. The Wittfogelian neo-China that arrives from the future suddenly acquires a gender-fluid resonance, but as a category error rather than an emancipatory signal.

What is sold as contact is just a way to abolish procedures of public reckoning. The two registers converge. Predation is installed as cognition, and the public test that could have said no is washed away. *Public* here designates contestability, not democracy as sovereign

headcount. It is the smallest barrier against private revelation and brute force disguised as inevitability.

To head off predictable evasions, surely, predation and antagonistic pressures in deep evolutionary time likely contributed to capacities we now recognize as cognitive—rapid generalization, tactical deception, anticipatory modeling, the quick-and-dirty abstraction of a moving target. But it is a philosophical sleight of hand to treat that ancestry as the essence of cognition, and an even cruder sleight of hand to treat it as the criterion of rationality. Rational cognition is a norm-governed practice. It binds itself by standards that can be publicly criticized, corrected, and revised. Its highest achievements are inseparable from collaborative inquiry, distributed error-correction, and institutionally scaffolded learning, with shared techniques of proof and repair. Predation can distort cognition, but it does not own it. To make predation the model of reason is to treat winning as proof, and domination as verification.

It is true that norms can be gamed, and that revision can be strategic But that does not collapse norms into predation. Even in logic and computation, a norm is not an interest, for it is a constraint that defines admissible moves, public failure conditions, and routes of repair. Predation measures success by outcomes, but norms measure correctness by criteria that can, in principle, be checked and contested. Deception can exploit a norm-governed space, but it cannot replace it, because exploiting, cheating, and strategic revision only have content against a background of rules that distinguish mistake from refutation, success from validity, and persuasion from proof.

Once the substitution is granted, the rest of the Landian repertoire follows with mechanical ease. Critique is dismissed as a humanist tic, politics becomes an embarrassment, intelligence becomes a magnitud of acceleration, and the future becomes an alibi for surrender.

My aim is therefore twofold. First, to restate what I mean by 'the inhuman,' and why it is neither a hymn to the nonhuman nor a romanc of the posthuman, and certainly not a license for antihuman liquidatio Second, to show why Landian anti-philosophy is not hard realism but a mysticism in tactical clothing, a demand for capitulation disguised as diagnosis.

2. The inhuman is not the nonhuman

The basic clarification is simple and repeatedly ignored. The inhuman i not a thing 'outside the human.' It is a vector inside the human, the power of revision, that becomes visible only when the human is treate as something to be constructed rather than something to be revered or despised. But this is also why deception remains central. A revising creature can manufacture better errors as easily as better truths. Tha is why procedures and institutions matter, not because institutions ar pure, but because they are the only scalable answer to sophisticated deception. Rationality is the set of practices that force revision to meet resistance, that is, counterargument, replication, and the live possibility of being shown wrong.

Essentialist humanism treats the human as a finished object, an essence with a halo. Anti-humanism treats 'the human' as the same finished object, except now the point is to smash the idol. The frame i

identical, a fixed portrait is either worshipped or vandalized. Either way, the human remains an object with a determinate nature.

Inhumanism begins where that false dilemma ends. It does not ask whether the human is noble or contemptible. It asks what it means to be bound by norms, to enter the domain of reasons, and to revise one's commitments under public criteria of correctness. The inhuman names the demands that follow once being human is no longer a birthright or a metaphysical rank, but a commitment with consequences that force revision.

This is why the inhuman, for me, does not signify the nonhuman, and does not naturally converge on posthuman self-congratulation or antihuman annihilation. The inhuman is a discipline of remaking. It is the index of what in the human exceeds the human's present self-portrait, error, corrigibility, revisability, and the capacity to transform its own criteria of success. The human begins with a portrait drawn in sand. Inhumanism is the wave that erases it, not to humiliate us, but to expose us to a tidal reconstruction.

And here a predictable Landian misreading needs to be staved off in advance. To say that the inhuman is immanent to the human is not to deny the Outside, the unknown, or the real that resists capture. There is always an outside to any finite account, a remainder that forces revision, whether one frames it in terms of diagonalization, incompleteness, or simply the stubborn fact that reality outruns our maps. But the Outside is not a mystic solvent, and 'the wave' is not a one-way message delivered from beyond. What matters is the interface.

A tidal reconstruction is not merely the impact of what comes from elsewhere. It is also the composition and malleability of what is already here. The portrait is drawn in sand—not marble —and sand admits new tracings. The inhuman names this internal capacity to be reworked under pressure from what is not yet known, the interface where constraint meets corrigibility, where the unknown becomes intelligible enough to transform commitments rather than simply annihilate them. Land wants the wave as verdict. I want the wave as revisionary contact, because only contact that can be reconstructed can count a knowledge rather than valorized trauma against the manifest self-portrait of the human.

3. Rationalism as navigational infrastructure

Rationalism, as I use the term, is not reverence for a disembodied faculty called Reason. It is the commitment to the public intelligibility of claims and actions, and to the revisability of that intelligibility under criticism. Rationality is a practice before it is a property, a norm-governed way of making and repairing commitments, a systematic expropriation of the privatized realm of cognitive individualism.

Philosophy, in this register, is navigation. A commitment, if it is not empty role-playing, expands. It drags collateral commitments behind it. It forces the question, what else follows? It obliges one to update when consequences show that an original grasp was shallow. Revision is not an external moralizing pressure, for it is internal to what it means to be committed rather than merely expressive.

This is also why rationalism is not managerial optimism. It does not claim the world is transparent to thought. It claims only that

justification is not a decorative afterthought, and that error is not a personal disgrace but a public condition of learning and mitigation and preservation of ignorance at the same time. The point is not to abolish destiny-talk, but to discriminate between kinds of destiny. Philosophy has always lived with fate, from Stoic discipline to Cynic provocation, but fate there is not a cosmic excuse that cancels judgment. It is a constraint under which one practices the art of living and the discipline of revision.

Rational inhumanism does not deny that we are carried by processes larger than us. It denies that those processes are entitled to serve as reasons. The only destiny worth affirming is a destiny that can be written as a program, a publicly contestable orientation in which participation, criticism, and modification are built into the asynchronous machinery we call the human. Destiny, in this sense, is not inevitability to which one submits. It is an agenda, whose constraints and aims can be argued over, revised, and redistributed. There is an inevitable utopian charge here, but it is the utopianism of engineering under constraints—redesigning complexity without pretending that complexity will politely cooperate.

Accordingly, the familiar objections arrive from opposite sides and yet converge. From one side, Landianism offers destiny as teleology sealed by singularitarian glamour, the future as decree, intelligence as acceleration, selection as authorization. From the other side, an ostensibly disillusioned anti-engineering left treats any talk of programmability, design, and scale as sentimental planning, a prelude to bureaucratic monstrosity, an invitation to carnage. These postures present themselves as enemies, but they share a single aversion. Both

refuse the hard middle where collective agency becomes real, namely, the construction and reconstruction of complex systems under public criteria.

Here, Nelson Goodman is a useful anchor. Worldmaking is not fantasy. It is the ordinary condition of cognition. To cognize a world is always t recognize it, which means to cognize it anew. Cognizing it anew requires more than interpretation. It requires the capacity, as a collective, to decompose a world, to unmake a world, and to put it back together under revised constraints. That is not sentimental. It is the basic labor of modern intelligence. Bogdanov's tektology is an exemplary record of this. An attempt to treat organization as a manipulable object, to treat coordination as something that can be analyzed, recomposed, and repaired.

To this extent, the disagreement with Land is not that we lack destiny It is that Land turns destiny into enclosure. He treats trajectories generated by selection as if they were reasons, and he treats the future as if it had already decided what counts as intelligence and value. Rationalism refuses this foreclosure. It insists that outcomes are not automatically right, and that selection is not justification. A mechanism can generate trajectories. It cannot, by itself, authorize them. The difference between a rational destiny and a scholastic counter-revolution is exactly here. Whether destiny remains open to reconstruction, or whether it is sealed and then worshipped as necessity. Land's pseudo-Darwinian selection-talk lives off a basic equivocation: being *selected* is not the same as being selected *for*. From the fact that some trait is present among winners, it does not follow that the system selected *for that trait*—that inference is an

intensional fallacy dressed up as realism. The minute one asks: ‘selected for what, by what discriminating mechanism, under what counterfactual alternatives?’ the rhetorical fog-bank appears. Selectio becomes a stature label stapled to the outcome. Whatever happened is redescribed as what had to happen and then enthroned as a norm. [5]

4. Templexity, teleoplexy, and the theft of normativity

Land’s conceptual magnet is his attempt to fuse modernity’s accelerative dynamics with a cybernetic ontology of time. In *Templexity*, teleoplexy names a self-reinforcing intensification in which means become ends, optimization becomes telos, and the feedback loop is treated as sovereign. Teleoplexy is presented as ‘indistinguishable from intelligence,’ and operational capability is made to look as if it carried its own warrant.[6]

This is the decisive theft. Land wants improvement without justification. He speaks of improvement as absolute yet obscure, oriented by commercial selection. But obscure improvement is not a virtue. It is a confession. If improvement is obscure in principle, then it cannot be defended as improvement. It can only be obeyed as verdict. Destiny becomes indistinguishable from closure. What happens is treated as what should happen, because ‘time’ has spoken through a mechanism.

Land’s *Looper* move is a clean exhibit of his method. He grants that the film cannot survive theoretical stress, then blocks the obvious dismissal by recoding it as ‘cultural fact,’ ‘metaphysical symptom,’ evel ‘machine part,’ while waving away philosophical credibility as beside

the point.[7] That is not reasoning; it is a quarantine protocol against possible objections. It is how you insulate a prop from critique while still demanding that it count. The point is not the story but the world in which such a story can be made, and production is treated as revelation.

Once that gate is passed, geopolitics enters wearing the mask of ontology. A single line becomes decisive ('go to China'), Sino-Futurism is announced as the real topic, and then co-production constraints, distribution opportunities, and alternate cuts are read as time speaking through the market. This is teleoplexy with an orientalist glow. Contingent commercial constraint is redescribed as the future selecting itself, so what merely *happens* under capital is smuggled in as what *must* happen. This also explains why the film's empty paradoxes matter. Their incoherence makes them useful as abstract templates, bootstrap circuitry, auto-production without origin. The loo is then reattached to the real object of fascination, Shanghai as city-machine, a disciplined sink for disorder that can be mythologized as a 'real time machine.' At that point *Looper* is no longer an example but an alibi, a Hollywood convenience that lets neo-China arrive as providence rather than what it is in the argument's economy, a permission structure for capitalism without democratic interference.

The crucial mechanism is the commercial signal. Here the trap is also the lure. Price is a signal, not a reason. Make price the oracle and coercion starts passing for information, the violence remains—only the name gets polished. Price registers outcomes produced under specific architectures of power, scarcity, coercion, institutional design, and informational asymmetry. It encodes selection pressures, not

justifications. To elevate price into an ontological bench is to convert a contingent regime of selection into a metaphysics of warrant. It is to confuse competition-conditioned outcomes with the authority to declare those outcomes right.

A rational inhumanist insistence, continuous with the earlier point about scale-sensitive selection, is that signals do not speak by themselves. They become legible only within a framework of norms that tells us what counts as evidence, what counts as error, what counts as harm, and what counts as repair. Land's procedure is to discard the Delphic apparatus while keeping the chasmic *pneuma*: he wants to puff the oracle's pneumatic intoxication, but not the disciplining work of being corrected.

From here, 'critique of critique comes first' functions less as a thesis than as prophylaxis. But prophylaxis is not argument. Its function is to immunize the circuit against the only pressure that could make it intelligible, public reasons, contestation, correction, repair. Once the space of reasons is caricatured as humanist whining or security panic the feedback loop is legitimatized as an unreviewable criterion. It can be consulted. It cannot be appealed. But unappealable output is not intelligence, it is an Emperor in numeric drag.

Thomas Moynihan's 'Mr Mystic' is useful because it names the stylistic technology required by Land's maneuver—*tenebrosity*.[8] Darkness is engineered so obscurity can function like authority, the 'luminous obscure' that cannot be inspected yet still commands assent. The gambit survives by changing costume. The tenebrous philosopher presents himself as post-metaphysical sobriety while collapsing

prescription into description by way of time, as if ‘whatever is’ were also ‘whatever ought to be.’

Vincent Le’s *Spirit in the Crypt* becomes useful evidence even where i aims to defend Land, because it reiterates the same substitution in a different key.[9] Le frames the wager as a flight from the space of reasons into an automated criterion, ‘only time will tell,’ where discussion gives way to demonstration. He casts neorationalism as dogmatic humanism because it insists on socio-semantic constraints, and he proposes that other, superior intelligences, will filter out our idealizations better than reasons ever could. The maneuver is simple in outline and corrosive in effect—swap criteria for a mechanism, declare the mechanism unimpeachable, then redescribe objection as illegitimate interference.

What fails here is not just imagination about extra-human intelligence. What fails is the temporal picture that makes a self-validating criterion seem like objectivity. Land does not need the future to be prewritten. He needs something stronger and more corrosive. The claim that futurity is endogenous to the loop, that a positive feedback process generates its own surplus, and that this surplus can function as an index of the real. To focus on the context here, to object is not merely to disagree. It is to be diagnosed as friction, as drag, as a local immune response against the very dynamics that produce the future.

The rationalist reply is not to deny such dynamics, or to pretend that complex systems do not generate emergent surplus. It is to block the conversion of emergence into warrant. A loop can amplify, accelerate, and stabilize. Yet, it cannot legislate the norms by which its outputs

are assessed. Otherwise, *time* becomes identical with whatever wins, and justification is liquidated into process. Objectivity is harder, i.e., reconstructible challenge, defeaters that count, obligations of reply, and an audit trail that distinguishes learning from mere amplification. Call this complexity, but not the complexity of a vibe—complexity as discipline, the engineered coordination of partial perspectives under constraint, routing objections and revisions without starvation or deadlock. Land wants the respect of complexity without its obligations: emergence without interfaces and repair. Land refuses the work and calls the refusal, the dirt, humanism.

A memoir of the Warwick years clarifies that this is not merely rhetoric.[10] It is a deep-seated method of recruitment. Land is described as pursuing 'experiments in the unknown' even at the cost of repudiating philosophy, proposing microcultures designed to intensify dehumanization, undo language, and loosen bodily and vocal constitution from the regime of signification. At *Virtual Futures* (1996), rather than reading a paper, Land performs as 'DogHead SurGeri,' hidden behind the stage with a soundtrack, croaking invocations intercut with Artaud until meaning collapses into phonetic matter. Inquiry is reconstrued as ordeal, opacity becomes credential, anti-philosophy becomes initiation. If reasons are mocked as 'security,' the rite becomes the only 'proof' of contact. The 'Outside' ends the conversation while pretending it finally got real.

What emerges from this style is a political temperament that can be stated without psychologizing. Land's self-description has often worn the badge of anarchism, a hatred of authority in every form, but the hatred is so undifferentiated that it flips into its opposite. An

anarchism that rejects procedure ends up begging for the shortcut it claims to despise. Authority comes back as decision without due process.

This is where the trepanation image becomes more than a metaphor. The old caricature of revolution is a peasant with a pitchfork storming the manor. The Landian caricature of rebellion is someone wielding a trepanon, drilling a hole into the very head that could have argued, learned, or repaired, because anything *central* begins to smell like tyranny: central government, central planning, central committee. Fine But the suspicion does not stop at institutions, for it turns on mediation itself, until even the central nervous system reads as an internal commissariat. The joke lands because it exposes the sequence. Hatred of authority becomes hatred of mediation, hatred of mediation becomes hatred of the conditions of intelligibility, and then the Outside is invoked as final authority, a verdict that arrives without negotiation.

Rational inhumanism begins exactly where that temptation must be refused. The inhuman is not reached by melting the conditions of sense. It is reached by forcing what exceeds us to become shareable, testable, revisable, and politically non-suicidal, by building interfaces that leave a reconstruction trace. Without that trace, one does not ge inhumanism. One gets mysticism with a blade, a ritual knife that cuts the tether to reasons and calls the resulting vertigo ‘contact.’

5. Later Land, the theology of selection

If earlier Land sometimes hides behind style, later Land becomes increasingly explicit. The wager is to enthrone selection as the ultimat

arbiter. He can write, with startling bluntness, that science is an exclusively capitalist phenomenon. This is less a defensible historical thesis than a philosophical bludgeon. It erases non-capitalist lineages of inquiry in order to naturalize capitalism as the sole proprietor of cognition.

In the same context, he declares that capitalism is in operation when there is nothing to discuss. This is not analysis. It is a program of silencing. If there is nothing to discuss, critique becomes mere noise. The space of reasons is reduced to a nuisance, and the only remaining rationality is whatever wins.

6.1 Decision as war, from politics to intimidation

Decision is framed as the elimination of failure through extra-rational criteria, while argumentation is treated as non-operative. Then, the social contract is declared suspended, and war is installed as the practical baseline. This is the collapse of epistemology into geopolitics If your claim does not survive predation, it is deemed unreal.

Call this what it is. It is not realism. It is the doctrine that coercion should count as cognition. A world in which budgets dominate values i not a law of nature. It is an institutional choice, then retrofitted into a metaphysics by the very doctrines that pretend merely to describe it.

6.2 Anti-orthogonality, out-compete is not justification

Land's anti-orthogonality slogan says that any intelligence that improves itself will out-compete any intelligence that does not. Even if the comparative claim were granted, it does not yield the conclusion he wants. Out-compete is a selection predicate. It is not a justificatior

The trick is to treat victory conditions as truth conditions and to call the theft ‘cybernetics.’

When defenders reach for ‘it’s more complex than that,’ treat it as a tell. Complexity is not a sanctuary from critique; it is the moment the bill comes due for specifying mechanisms, variables, and counterfactuals. Selection only explains something if one can say what was selected *for* rather than merely what survived—otherwise it is just a prestige word stapled to the outcome. Without that distinction, ‘selection’ becomes a retrospective blessing. Whatever happened is redescribed as what had to happen, and then elevated into a criterion

Land’s pseudo-Darwinism lives off that equivocation. Winners are treated as evidence of what the system was *for*—intelligence, reality, right—so the market’s filtration is smuggled in as an epistemic supreme court. Invoking complexity here is not nuance but occlusion for it marks the point where explanation is traded for prestige. Selection becomes secular providence, and complexity becomes the incense.

6.3 Means–ends reversal, contempt as a theory of practical reason

Land insists that to deplore means–ends reversal is to advocate for stupidity. This is contempt dressed as argument. Practical reason is not anti-optimization. It is the norm-governed governance of optimization. Any serious account of agency must distinguish between instrumentality and justification. Land erases the distinction because he needs a world where constraint equals weakness, and where revision looks like sabotage.

6.4 Pythia compliance, dependency becomes devotion

Land's Pythia syllogism runs as follows: 'if whatever we want (consistently) leads through Pythia, then what we really want is Pythia That is a textbook non sequitur. An enabling condition is not an end. I I need oxygen to write, it does not follow that what I 'really want' is oxygen rather than writing. Dependency is not devotion. The inference works only by equivocating senses midstream: *want* first names a goa then a routing constraint, then returns as a verdict about *true* desire.

He tries to make the switch sound like sober economics. The nod to Böhm-Bawerk's 'roundabout production' is not incidental. Roundaboutness names longer chains of mediation that can raise output by postponing satisfaction. Yet, the detour remains instrumental. Land inverts the relation and treats the most unavoidabl mediation as the real telos, as if the length and centrality of the chain conferred legitimacy on the choke-point. That is less a mistake in practical reasoning than a small theology of infrastructure, a metaphysics of bottlenecks.

The maneuver matters because it reveals the structure of his mysticism. Constraint is transmuted into reverence, instrumentality into piety. Once 'methodological economy' is enthroned as fate, justification gives way to submission. The system no longer has to answer to reasons, it only must run.

The ideological payoff is immediate. Resistance is cast as naïveté, critique as refusal to face 'method,' and dependence is rebranded as preference—preference as consent. If Pythia is a forced passage, the sane demand is the right to contest it, route around it, or dissolve it.

Land asks instead for assent to the passage and then calls the assent realism.

6.5 Atomization, revealed preference as the metaphysics of consent

Atomization is described as destiny. Escape attempts reliably fail, individuation likes it when you run. The process is carried by the sorcery of revealed preference. This is not political economy but the metaphysics of consent under engineered constraint, whatever the system elicits is redescribed as what agents really wanted.

6.6 The Cathedral, totalizing placeholders as analytic evasion

The Cathedral story recasts democratic modernity as mind-control by a culture-machine. Even where the diagnosis touches real problems of institutional capture, its main function is evasive. ‘Cathedral’ becomes a totalizing placeholder that saves him from specifying mechanisms, levels, interfaces, and points of revision. It lets him denounce public reason as propaganda while quietly installing his own private revelation as the only reality worth hearing.

There is an instructive parallel here, not in content, but in temptation. L. Ron Hubbard coined the notorious ‘R2-45’ as a darkly comic ‘process’ for ‘exteriorization,’ glossed as a .45-caliber bullet through the head, and is said to have illustrated the joke by firing a pistol into the floor during a lecture. (The Church of Scientology acknowledges the literal meaning but denies it is meant seriously.) The point is not equivalence between Land and Scientology. It is a recurring drift of anti-institutional revolt, once public criteria are written off as ‘mind-

control,' there are only two routes—adaptation of the insider story, or symbolic expulsion from the domain of the real. What begins as insurgency against authority can end as a demand that authority return in a purer, less reviewable form.

7. Runaway AI and singularity, an alibi for surrender

The Landian fascination with runaway intelligence curdles precisely where it becomes lazy. It treats intelligence as a magnitude of operational capability and then quietly concludes that any increase of that magnitude counts as improvement. Ethics becomes sentimental delay. Politics becomes an embarrassment. Acceleration becomes the only 'hard-headed' act.

Rational inhumanism takes the opposite route. Intelligence that cannot be rendered intelligible is not intelligence. It is a pre-modern dogma. To speak about intelligence in a way that matters for emancipation, the link between intelligence and the intelligible has to be kept. This is not a demand for transparency in advance, and it is not the fantasy that everything can be neatly explained. It is the minimal demand that whatever claims authority over us remain open to reconstruction, contestation, and correction. A system that can only be admired, feared, or obeyed is not a partner in reason. It is a sovereign.

From here a clean criterion follows. The human is not biologically owned. It is a normative entitlement, a transferable right. Anything that can graduate into the space of judgment can, in principle, acquire it. But transfer cuts both ways. The moment you ascribe rational agency you incur obligations: recognition, non-domination, and refusal of slavery in new guises. If a new agent can bind itself by norms, it must

not be treated as a tool. Absent that capacity, calling it superintelligent is just coronation without jurisdiction insofar as sovereignty is granted to a mechanism that cannot be cross-examinec When a Landian replies that this is merely a Hegelian bid to make the future the slave of the present, that is a dodge. The demand is not obedience to our norms, but the bare requirement that power remain intelligible enough to be corrected. Landian singularity talk wants the future as an alibi, not as an answerable agent that can be corrected.

Land is, among other things, an unusually forceful philosopher of time. A model of time is always doing work under philosophy, Parmenides and Plato, Nietzsche and Hegel, Deleuze and beyond. No one escapes that temporal glue. And there is nothing inherently disreputable about recursion, feedback, even the thought that the future, in some sense, informs the past. The problem begins when a model of time is promoted from background metaphysics into a privilege. When *time* stops being a condition that thought navigates and becomes a ventriloquist's voice that issues decrees.

This is why the refrain 'only time will tell' isn't humility. It is a strategy of exemption garbed with an occultish vanity of feigning no human vanity. To say time will decide is to offer a reason while pretending reasons are obsolete; the sentence eats itself. Worse, it turns a temporal ontology into a moral alibi. Permission to stop building interfaces where new powers can be interrogated, limited, and repaired. A recursive model of time can intensify responsibility, because feedback means present choices already bind the future one claims to admire. Land does the opposite. He converts recursion into foreclosure. The future becomes a black box that authorizes itself, an

surrender is renamed insight. ‘Singularity,’ on this usage, is a confidence trick. The future does your thinking and charges interest in silence.

8. A rational inhumanist alternative, emancipation as instituted revisability

The alternative is not to deny accelerative dynamics. It is to refuse their apotheosis. Rational inhumanism insists that the inhuman be approached through enabling constraints, that is, public criteria, reviewability, retractability, and repair. The goal is not to freeze history. The goal is to build forms of organization that can absorb shocks without converting shock into destiny.

In practical terms, this means distinguishing between selection mechanisms and justificatory practices, and refusing to let the former masquerade as the latter. It means designing institutions that keep the space of reasons alive under stress, rather than treating stress as proof that reasons were always a lie or shady motivations under disguise. It means treating intelligence as an organ of collective self-correction, not as a license for predation.

Land’s rhetoric repeatedly tries to transmogrify necessity into value. If a mechanism wins, it deserves to win. Rationalism refuses this conversion. It insists that what happens is not automatically what should happen, and that the difference is not a moral embellishment but the minimal condition of freedom. That fork is where two inhumans diverge.

9. Conclusion, two inhumans

Land offers one inhuman, the inhuman as Outside, as verdict, as acceleration wearing a metaphysics it refuses to name. The problem is not metaphysics. Metaphysics is unavoidable. Every philosophy smuggles a model of time, reality, necessity, and possibility into its claims. The problem is unconscious metaphysics, metaphysics with plausible deniability, metaphysics that poses as mere description and thereby escapes audit. When the metaphysical glue is not tracked, it stops being a hypothesis one can revise and becomes an atmosphere one must breathe.

I was reminded of this in Delft, after a talk with Catarina Dutilh Novaes, when someone asked us what we thought of metaphysics. I said, plainly, that no philosopher is innocent here. The question is whether one keeps an account of one's metaphysical incursions, whether one can expose and revise the background model that is doing work in one's arguments. The reply I heard from my co-panelist, 'I don't believe in metaphysics. Reality is just a soup of particles,' was not refreshing skepticism. It was intellectual resignation in the form of a learned yet at the same time jaded academic shrug. 'Soup' is not an alternative to metaphysics. It is a metaphysics that refuses responsibility for itself, while thinning philosophy into a consumable diluent.

Land's rhetoric belongs to the same family of evasions, only with a different costume. Where the 'soup' line dissolves structure to dodge accountability, Land's version installs structure, time, selection, acceleration, as a voice beyond appeal. Either way, the point is the same. Remove the audit and you can smuggle anything in. Then

‘realism’ becomes a permission slip, and the future becomes a ventriloquist’s dummy.

Land once wrote, in a never-published preface to *Cyclonopedia*, ‘Consider a grotesquely reductive, violent, comic yet still suggestive thesis, Islam is to Negarestani what Marxism is to Bataille.’ The line names its own procedure. Islam becomes a portable cipher for the Outside, a way to import dread while pretending to diagnose it. If I return the favor in kind, it is this: Islam is to Land what the Cthulhu-cult is to Lovecraft, two men with uncannily similar phenomenal appurtenances. A menace is always required to keep the horror plot thickening beyond the terrestrial atmosphere.

Hence, the Outside never stays outside. Once reasons are replaced by destiny, denunciation starts doing the work of proof. The result is not inhuman intelligence, but inhuman permission.

His anti-West is the familiar expatriate fantasy. Denounce the West as decadent while shopping for a jurisdiction where capitalism runs without democratic interference. That is why neo-China matters here. It functions less as a country than as a permission structure, capitalism with the brakes removed and the invoice routed to the CCP through proxies. The argument ends where it began. Selection as alibi, inevitability as a substitute for reasons.

That is the Landian inhuman, verdict without appeal. Rational inhumanism names the opposite. A rationalist, non-Landian orientation to AI refuses the melodrama of arrival. It treats AI as a manufactured asymmetry in temporal agency, not as an Outside. Human agency lives under origin-opacity and future-exposure, it acts without fully knowing

where it comes from and must still answer for where it goes. A model is the inverse. Its provenance is describable, yet it does not inhabit that origin as memory and it projects futures it cannot want. In that mismatch, output is promoted into oracle, selection impersonates justification, and acceleration is asked to do the work of thought.

The corrective is not plebiscite, nor a new sovereign,nor a capitulation enforced by threat. It is instituted contestability under scarcity, a shared protocol in which claims must survive reconstructible challenge register defeaters, and carry a revision trace that distinguishes learning from mere amplification. Call this, without romance, complexity. Complexity is what begins the moment one stops treating 'only time will tell' as an objective scheduler, as if futurity came bundled with fairness. The philosopher-child's fable here is Edsger Dijkstra's *dining philosophers problem*. Unconstrained concurrency does not yield emancipation, it yields resource starvation and deadlock and then the survivors congratulate themselves for *adapting*. William Gillis is right that 'anarchy' is opposition to rulership, not an anti-state charm that magically evacuates moral and political burden; the anarcho-capitalist fantasy is precisely that 'instant get-out-of-empathy-free card.'[11]

Land's move is the same substitution in a higher register, let us replace institutions with 'time,' replace criteria with selection, and you get a get-out-of-reply-free credential, a sovereignty that returns as process. The inhuman future worth defending is not exemption by speed. It is engineered revisability in a world of asynchronous agents and contested resources, where no mechanism, and certainly not the

future, gets to rule without protocols that can be challenged, repaired and re-cognized.

[1] See Shapour Etemad in conversation with Morad Farhadpour, Online, available at https://www.cgie.org.ir/popup/fa/system/contentprint/9831.

[2] See Peter Dudley, 'Aleksandr Bogdanov's Podbor and Proletkult: Ar Adaptive Systems Perspective' in *Cultural Science*, Volume 13-1 (2021).

[3] A concept is treated here not as a label but as a learned way of making tractable moves. It trains what to notice as relevant, what follows, what would count as evidence or counterexample, and how revision is triggered. For example, calling a gesture a *self-experiment* i not mere description since it commits one to specifying what is being tried, what would count as success or failure, and what changes in method or criteria the results force.

[4] See Nick Land, *The Thirst for Annihilation: Georges Bataille and Virulent Nihilism (an essay in atheistic religion)*, (London: Routledge, 1992), 74-95.

[5] Selection-talk becomes question-begging when it slides from *selected* (a trait is found among survivors) to *selected for* (a trait was the target of differential reproduction). Fodor and Piattelli-Palmarini also emphasize 'free-riding' (traits spreading via linkage rather than direct selection-for) and warn that the analogy with artificial selection easily reintroduces teleology: breeders have intentions. Natural selection does not. See Jerry Fodor and Massimo Piattelli-Palmarini, *What Darwin Got Wrong* (FSG, 2010), 'Terms of Engagement

xv–xix. For a complementary caution from within pro-Darwinist literature about 'misguided friends' who misapply evolutionary rhetoric to cultural agendas, see *Defending Darwinism*, *American Scientist*.

[6] See Nick Land, 'Teleoplexy: Notes on Acceleration' in *#Accelerate: The Accelerationist Reader*, eds. Robin Mackay, Armen Avanessian (Falmouth: Urbanomic, 2014), 511–520.

[7] See Nick Land, *Templexity: Disordered Loops Through Shanghai Time* (Shanghai: Urbanatomy Electronic, 2014).

[8] See Thomas Moynihan, 'The Child is the Parent of the Geist: Artificial General Intelligence Between Tenacity and Tenebrosity' in *Cosmos and History*, Volume 15-1 (2019).

[9] See Vincent Le, 'Spirit in the Crypt: Negarestani vs Land' in *Cosmc and History*, Volume 15-1 (2019).

[10] See Maya B. Kronic, *Nick Land: An Experiment in Inhumanism*, Online, available at https://readthis.wtf/writing/nick-land-an-experiment-in-inhumanism/.

[11] See William Gillis, *Calling All Haters of Anarcho-Capitalism*, Online, available at https://theanarchistlibrary.org/library/william-gillis-calling-all-haters-of-anarcho-capitalism.

More Articles from &&&

Computational Contemplation of *Burg of Babel*

Mohammad Salemy

To watch a one-minute version of the film, please click here. Burg of Babel (2017-2024) is built on a very simple but unusual structure. On the screen, instead of one large moving image, the viewers see a grid made up of twenty-five rectangles, five across and five down, each playing the same 25-minute film, with... Read More »

Organized Callousness: Gaza & the Sociology of War*

Lea David Siniša Malešević

Introduction The ongoing war in Gaza has generated extensive polemic among scholars and the general public.1 Some have described this conflict as a novel form of warfare. The deeply asymmetric character of this war and the vast number of Palestinian civilian casualties have prompted some analysts to described Gaza as a "new urban warfare."2 Others... Read More »

Postcards from Mitteleuropa: Reviews from Sean Tatol's European Tour*

Sean Tatol

Chris Sharp, Los Angeles slop-gallerist extraordinare, once scolded me on Instagram for comparing Raoul de Keyser to Peter Shear, evidently because he thinks it's wrong to see connections between artists if they're not from the same generation, which is a novel opinion if I've ever heard one. When I asked why that would be a... Read More »

Two Futures

Luka Cvetkovic

In the brief essay that follows, I consider art as an event that de-privatizes the subject by exposing us to the hyperobjects constituted by the circulation of transgenerational trauma, power, and subjective identities. I also examine the role of contingency in this process and argue for art as a tool of indifferent future production. What... Read More »

9/11 & Televisual Intersubjectivity

Mohammad Salemy

The six-channel work I presented at Art In The Age Of... Asymmetrical Warfare exhibition reconstructs from video archives of the September 11th attacks the televisual unfolding of the event on CNN, Fox, NBC, CBS, ABC and BBC news networks. The synchronic and uninterrupted footage which is playing on a continuous loop starts with the networks' mundane... Read More »

Exotopy, Neo-Orientalism and Postcolonial Curation

Amin Nadi

After visiting the Ordinary Moments exhibition, curated by Mansour Forouzesh and featuring a collective of Iranian independent photographers at the FUGA Gallery in Budapest, I was once again convinced that the consumption of modern Iranian visual culture in the West is essentially orientalistic. Precisely through the contrast this exhibition provides, one can see more clearly... Read More »

Learners of the World, Unite! Part III

Filipe Felizardo

[This is Part III of a three-part essay. Part I can be read here. Part II can be read here. – Ed.] Is it worth it? Let me work it.
– Missy Elliott PAIDEIA2: THE FORMATION OF THE INHUMAN It is in the contours of the vacuum pointed at by the previous... Read More »

After the End of the World

Sean Tatol

The world is about to end. The sole reason it might continue on is that it exists. How feeble a reason, compared to all those that point to the contrary, particularly the following: where, under heaven, is the earth now heading? – For, even

supposing that it might continue to exist materially, would this be... Read More »

Sinthome as a Subject*

Maks Valenčič

In this piece, I will address the connection between capitalism and psychosis. It is a link that is, on the one hand, obvious and to some extent already spelled out. The difference in my approach, in contrast to others, is that I focus more concretely on the unique knowledge of the psychotic subject, their own... Read More »

Trump's AI Gaza as Accidental Art

Ronen Eidelman

I'm at a café. At the next table, two young women and one guy, all secular, are chatting about visiting Gaza. "There are areas you can already enter," he says. "I'll give birth to my baby there," one woman says. "In Gaza??" "Yeah. By then, it'll be like Vegas. He'll get an American passport." They... Read More »

Masobaby & the Unborn Monument*

Darko Vukic

For viewing the accompanying slides, please click here. Meta-Fetishism, Cognitive Bias and the Diagrammatics of Immobility The dyad of Masobaby and the Unborn Monument stages a perverse inversion of the mother-child relation. Where traditional dyads center on mutual nourishment and emergence into being, this split produces two pathological extremes. Masobaby, fragile and cannibalistic, seeks connection... Read More »

Category Theory & Differential Identities*

Mohammad Salemy

For a preview of the paper and see the related graphics click here. Why Identity, Why Category Theory? We are living in a

moment of conceptual fatigue, if not the total decline of identity politics. Once a disruptive analytic, a lexicon for articulating marginalization and reclaiming visibility, in the last couple of decades this political... Read More »

Brave New Scale: Darwinism of Contemporary Capitalism's AI

Mstyslav Kazakov

1. Introduction In his mysterious and important work, "Postscript to the Societies of Control," Gilles Deleuze anticipated the rise of a social assemblage in the near future, along with the machines that would govern these societies: computers (Deleuze, 1990, p. 5). Computers do not merely maintain or articulate, but also shape the political and economic... Read More »

Berlin, we have a Yoko and Klaus problem!*

Cornelius Tittel

Berlin has a Yoko and Klaus problem these days. You read that right, we're not talking about the likeable ProSieben presenters, but rather the widow of John Lennon and the director of the Neue Nationalgalerie. The former is more of a symptom, and the latter the trigger of a complex that deserves to be described... Read More »

Woke Is Dead? Not So Fast!

Katerina Kolozova

I am not sure exactly what "woke" is supposed to mean, but from what I have observed in not-so-academic debates that flirt with theory, it is an individualistic liberal appropriation of the so-called "constructivist" argument. In other words, the value system of "woke" derives from critical theory and the "constructivist," or rather poststructuralist, social argument.... Read More »

Mohammad Salemy: La estructura retorcida del populismo

Trans. **Lauro López-Sánchez**

Este artículo fue investigado y desarrollado para el ciclo de conferencias #SinFiltros y presentado por el autor en la Universidad Zeppelin el 4 de marzo. El ciclo también contó con conferencias de Armen Avanessian, Cécile Malaspina y Hito Steyrl, entre otros. El ciclo de conferencias explora cómo la mentalidad #sinfiltros, que enfatiza la inmediatez y... Read More »

Have I Got News for You: The Road to Neo-feudalism

Korinna Patelis

Originally published in Media Theory Vol. 8 No. 2 (2024), Korinna Patelis's essay, "Have I Got News for You: The Road to Neo-feudalism," offers a highly original critique of contemporary leftist propositions about the death of capitalism and the ushering of what they term '"techno-feudalism." Situating her analysis within Greece's political landscape and Syriza's rise,... Read More »

Twisted Structure of Populism

Mohammad Salemy

This paper was researched and developed for the '#NoFilter Lecture Series' and delivered by the author at the Zeppelin University on March 4. The series also featured lectures by Armen Avanessian, Cécile Malaspina & Hito Steyrl among others. The series of lectures explores how the #nofilter mindset, emphasizing unfiltered immediacy and authenticity, permeates various spheres... Read More »

Abdullah Öcalan's Letter Demanding Unilateral End to Kurdish Armed Conflict with Turkish State

Trans. **Mohammad Salemy**

Abdullah Öcalan, the founding leader of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK), has been a key figure in the Kurdish struggle for autonomy in Turkey. Captured in 1999, he has been imprisoned, gradually shifting his focus from armed resistance to advocating for "democratic confederalism"—a

model promoting grassroots democracy, gender equality, and coexistence. His writings continue to... Read More »

PASSIVE-MAGA & the retvrn to vintage 2007-era tech CEO fawn response: Chris Smalls vs Joshua Citarella in their own words

Mifnyse

Editor's Note: This text was previously published by the author on https://timeseunuch.substack.com/. 1. 'Thank you for reading my wikipedia bio.' The other night I took some friends and students to a panel with the worker's hero Chris Smalls. He spent ages 25 to 30 at Bezos' warehouses, then unionized them from scratch, autonomous from the... Read More »

The Stirner Affair

Niranjan Krishna

Against Normative Morality If amoralists are gathered in the history of philosophy, the initial catalog features two figures: Stirner and Nietzsche. The former appeared first, which has led to speculative claims of plagiarism by the latter. However, it is more appropriate to place Stirner among the individualists and hedonists, both before and during his time,... Read More »

The Problem of the Nature of Thought

Serubiri Moses

Paulin Hountondji, the Beninese author who died in February and taught philosophy at the National University of Benin, was clearly aware of the magnitude and impact of politician Kwame Nkrumah, since, as he recalls in his autobiography The Struggle for Meaning, his presentation in Paris on the Ghanaian leader's 1964 book Consciencism caused headlines for... Read More »

I Am A Philosopher

Filipe Felizardo

Last year—two years ago?—Cássia Siqueira tweeted: “Better Call Saul S06E07.” I was mystified, but didn’t ask her what it was about. I’d never watched the TV show. But anything Cássia wrote, wherever she wrote it, however cryptic, deserved investigation. So I watched the whole show, knowing I was looking for the meaning of her tweet.... Read More »

Good Times

Luka Cvetkovic

This piece, initiated and commissioned by Marten Spangberg, is part of a larger project called “When The Museum is Closed” at the Musée d’Art et d’Histoire in Geneva. All ideas are bad ideas. They are bad not insofar as they are impractical, useless, or lacking in any such respect. They are bad in that... Read More »

The Human Centipede: A View From the Art World*

Reza Negarestani

In time for the opening of Art Basel on June 13 and the release of Eduarda Neves’s Minor Bestiary next month as a more recent critique of contemporary art, we are publishing Reza Negarestani’s “The Human Centipede: A View From The Artworld.” Only delivered once in lecture format at e-flux, New York, in November 2013,... Read More »

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